From visiting the websites and viewing the videos in Part I, I learned that assistive technology is not always given to students who need it in high schools. Many students are not being given the proper materials to increase their potential for learning. Assistive technology allows a student with a disability to gain their independence. They are able to write their own papers, take their own notes, and fill out their own tests. The fact that one of the teacher’s aide claimed that he felt as if he was doing all of Jamie’s work for him is inexcusable. Helping children with disabilities does not mean to do their work for them- it means to support the student with necessary materials and tools so that the student can learn the information and complete the work on their own. I also learned that assistive technology is defined by as “anything that makes ‘it’ easier for a student to turn things on, get dressed, eat, bathe, read, write, see, get around, move, communicate, or play. This means that assistive technology can range from the simplest tools to the most complex tools.

The ATTO website impressed me because it defined common terms in the dialogue of assistive technology. This website also defines the IDEA and other useful information about rules and regulations for teachers put in place for students with disabilities. This site also provides many different examples for many different types of assistive technology. For example, the website lists many different ways of promoting computer technology: enlarging the size of the text, changing the font or color of the text, having the text read aloud, labels for pictures, use of microphones, etc. This website also includes the different things that assistive technology means to schools, students, and parents. For example, this website describes that AT must be free of charge to the family and must be provided if necessary. I will want to remember and most likely go back to this website to use as a resource for different ways of promoting assistive technology in my classroom.

Technology provides independence, self-efficacy, manipulation, and communication for students with diverse learning needs. Students who cannot physically hand write because of their poor muscle control can use a computer to type or speak into a microphone which is connected to software that types for them. This allows students to complete their necessary work in a fashion that suits them best. Students do not need someone else to write down all of their answers for them because they are able to be independent due to technology. Technology basically makes the difficult life of students with diverse learning needs a little easier and more bearable.

Personally, I have experienced the communication with a student who had to use assistive technology. This experience comes from middle school when I became friends with a girl who was deaf. The girl (I cannot remember her name) wore hearing aids, practiced sign language, and had an interpreter during classes. At home, she used **TTY** (teletypewriter) to communicate with her friends and family. I remember the first time I called her to ask her a question about something I had missed in class. I had to speak to a proctor and then they would type my words into a computer which was sent over to my friend. When my friend came up with a response to my questions, she would type the answer back and the proctor would read me her responses. I learned from this experience that even though my friend was deaf, she was still actively involved in the classroom and the content necessary. She received better grades than I did and I had no assistive technology or disability. **From this experience, I learned that needing assistive technology does not mean that a person is incapable of completing their tasks; it just means that they need some support. The TTY was a little awkward to use at first but I eventually got the hang of it. I would call my friend just to see how she was doing on the weekends and I know that she greatly appreciated me taking the extra few minutes to talk through the proctor.**

**From this assignment, I will carry the fact that assistive technology does not demand that a student is incapable and incompetent. I will carry the knowledge that the most basic assistive technology can change the independence of a child in a classroom and at home. I will, as I prepare to become a teacher, include different methods of learning materials in my lesson plans and make sure that all of the information is accessible to all of my students. I will get to know my students and learn what allows my students with disabilities to learn at their highest potential. After I learn this, I will support these methods to their entirety and engage all students in the classroom. Meeting the needs of special education students along with non-disabled learners can actually be fun for all students and promote life skills. Non-disabled students can learn how to help their fellow peers and I can mediate this process as a teacher. Non-disabled students can learn and see what it is like for the students with disabilities to carry out activities. Together, students can come up with ways to make the material more easily accessible for all students and as a class, we can determine which methods to use.**